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VDOE Names New Chief Academic Officer

Superintendent of Public Instruction Steven R. Staples today announced that Steven M. Constantino will become the Virginia Department of Education's chief academic officer and assistant superintendent for instruction, effective August 15. Constantino has served as superintendent of Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools since 2011.

"Steven is an innovative instructional leader with a national reputation for improving outcomes for students and engaging families and communities," Staples said. "His experience and energy will be invaluable as the department guides Virginia's 132 school divisions into an era when all schools — from the highest-performing to the most challenged — will be expected to focus on continuous improvement."

In 2015, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents selected Constantino as the Region 2 (Peninsula, Hampton Roads and Eastern Shore) Superintendent of the Year. Under his leadership, student achievement in the division improved in all content areas and for all student subgroups. Last year, Williamsburg-James City County was one of only five divisions to receive a state high school redesign grant.

Constantino served as deputy superintendent in Cobb County — Georgia's second largest school district — from 2008-2011. While there, he co-led a federally funded project to prepare teachers to be successful in urban settings and expanded the access of minority students to advanced and college-level courses.

Constantino began his career as an educator in 1980 in upstate New York, where he served in several school districts as a music teacher, band director, district director of fine arts and finally, as a high school assistant principal. In 1992, he moved to Virginia as assistant principal of Gar-Field High in Prince William County.

Constantino was named principal of Stonewall Jackson High in 1995. In 2000, Newsweek Magazine recognized Stonewall Jackson as one of the top 100 most challenging high schools in the country. Constantino was also named Prince William County Principal of the Year for 2000 and received the 2000 Distinguished Educational Leadership Award from the Washington Post. The following year, Time Magazine selected Stonewall Jackson as its high school of the year and highlighted Constantino's success in engaging parents in the life of the school and the education of their children.

He is the author of four books on family engagement and has served as an assistant and adjunct professor of educational leadership and policy at George Mason University, and as an adjunct instructor at the College of William & Mary.

Constantino earned a doctorate in educational leadership and policy from Virginia Tech in 2002 and a certificate of advanced study in educational administration from the University of New York at Cortland in 1989. He earned master's and bachelor's degrees in music education from the State University of New York at Potsdam, in 1985 and 1980, respectively.

Constantino succeeds John "Billy" Haun, who retired from the department in June to become executive director of the Virginia High School League.

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